



REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
**NEW ORLEANS DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS**  
P.O. BOX 60267  
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA 70160-0267

October 6, 2008

Planning, Programs, and  
Project Management Division  
Environmental Planning  
and Compliance Branch

**TO INTERESTED PARTIES**

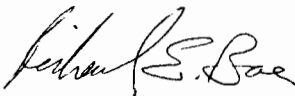
The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mississippi Valley Division, New Orleans District has prepared a draft supplemental environmental impact statement (EIS) for the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal (IHNC) Lock Replacement project. The existing IHNC Lock allows for navigation between the higher water surface elevations of the Mississippi River and the lower water surface elevations of the IHNC, the eastern portion of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, and the remaining, authorized portion of the Mississippi River-Gulf Outlet. The original final (EIS) for the project was prepared in 1997 and was entitled Mississippi River-Gulf Outlet, New Lock and Connecting Channels. Subsequent to preparation of the final EIS the official name of the project was changed.

The draft supplemental EIS recommends replacement of the existing IHNC Lock with a new lock to be located within the IHNC, north of the Claiborne Avenue Bridge, using the float-in-place construction method. The plan also includes replacement of the St. Claude Avenue Bridge with a new low-level, double-bascule bridge; modifications to the Claiborne Avenue Bridge; construction of an off-site facility, referred to as a graving site, for partial construction of lock modules; and resumption of a community impact mitigation plan. The recommended plan is very similar to the plan selected for construction in the record of decision for the 1997 final EIS. The draft supplemental EIS contains additional evaluations of lock construction techniques and procedures and details about the location and design of sites proposed for disposal of material dredged from the IHNC, including the methods proposed for disposal of contaminated sediments. Detailed analyses of the post-Hurricane Katrina natural and human environment in the project area are presented, along with the expected impacts of the recommended plan and other alternatives on this changed environment.

Attached for your review and comment are the abstract page and the summary section of the draft supplemental EIS. The draft supplemental EIS and its appendices can be viewed at <http://www.mvvn.usace.army.mil/prj/ihnc>. Hard copies are available for viewing at local libraries. If you are not able to access the draft supplemental EIS by either of these means, a hard copy or electronic copy is available upon request. The public comment period for the draft supplemental EIS ends on November 24, 2008.

A public meeting on the draft supplemental EIS will be held at the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School located at 1617 Caffin Avenue, New Orleans, Louisiana. The meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 12, 2008, beginning at 6:30 pm.

Please send all inquiries or comments to Mr. Richard Boe either by mail, fax, or email. Mr. Boe's address is U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (PM-RP), P.O. Box 60267, New Orleans, Louisiana 70160-0267. Mr. Boe's phone number is (504) 862-1505, his fax number is (504) 862-2088, and his email address is [richard.e.boe@usace.army.mil](mailto:richard.e.boe@usace.army.mil).

  
for Elizabeth Wiggins  
Chief, Environmental Planning  
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Enclosures